

REUTER
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WASHINGTON

CONGRESSMEN SAY U.S. INVOLVED IN COVERT ACTIVITIES

By DAVID HUME

TWO CONGRESSMEN WHO VISITED CENTRAL AMERICA THIS WEEK CHARGED TODAY THERE IS NO DOUBT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT "IS DEEPLY INVOLVED IN COVERT ACTIVITIES" AIMED AT OVERTHROWING THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT.

"WE DEPLORE THIS ACTION BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IT VIOLATES THE LAW WHICH CONGRESS PASSED LAST YEAR FORBIDDING SUCH ACTIONS," SAID REP. BERKLEY BEDELL, AN IOWA DEMOCRAT, READING FROM A PREPARED STATEMENT.

LAST YEAR CONGRESS PASSED THE BOLAND AMENDMENT WHICH BARS THE USE OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (CIA) FUNDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF OVERTHROWING NICARAGUA'S SANDINISTA GOVERNMENT.

REP. ROBERT TORRICELLI, A NEW JERSEY DEMOCRAT, SAID INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED IN NICARAGUA AND HONDURAS SHOWED "THE EVIDENCE IS OVERWHELMING" THAT THE ANTI-SANDINISTA REBELS ARE TRAINED AND SUPPORTED BY THE UNITED STATES.

HE ADDED THAT THE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO HONDURAS, JOHN NEGROPONTE, HAD DESCRIBED THE BOLAND AMENDMENT AS A "LEGAL TRIVIALITY" THAT SHOULD NOT STAND IN THE WAY OF U.S. INTERESTS IN THE REGION.

THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION HAS SAID IT IS OBEDIING BOTH THE LETTER AND THE SPIRIT OF THE BOLAND AMENDMENT.

FORMER DEMOCRATIC SEN. DICK CLARK OF IOWA, A MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION, SAID "THERE IS NO LONGER ANY QUESTION OF THE COVERT INVOLVEMENT" OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IN NICARAGUA.

CLARK, DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN POLICY AT THE ASPEN INSTITUTE, A PRIVATE RESEARCH ORGANIZATION, TOLD REPORTERS THE ALLEGED COVERT ACTIVITY "PROVES TO LATIN AMERICA THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS EMBARKED ONCE AGAIN ON A POLICY OF INTERVENTION."

THE CONGRESSMEN URGED FELLOW HOUSE MEMBERS TO SUPPORT ACTION BY REP. MICHAEL BARNES, A MARYLAND DEMOCRAT, "TO STOP THIS SECRET WAR IN NICARAGUA."

A HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE YESTERDAY ADOPTED A MEASURE PROPOSED BY BARNES WHICH WOULD DENY U.S. SUPPORT FOR GROUPS OPPOSING THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT UNLESS REQUESTED BY THE PRESIDENT AND APPROVED BY A JOINT CONGRESSIONAL RESOLUTION.

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